

Washington State Patrol Media Release

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Be a Defensive Driver not a Distracted Driver

On Tuesday July 1st the new cell phone law goes into effect. It will be illegal to drive and talk on your cell phone at the same time without a hands-free device. This is a secondary violation which means that if a police officer observes a moving violation and stops a motorist that is holding a cell phone up to their ear, they may be cited under the new law.

Most important is the safety of all motorists. Every motorist at one time or another has been cut off or had a vehicle fail to yield to them. Everyday, motorists fail to stop at stop signs and traffic lights, some intentionally and some because they were not paying attention. Unfortunately drivers still choose to drive under the influence of drugs and alcohol and their driving can be very unpredictable. Do you really trust the driving of everyone out on the road?



For you and your family's safety, the Washington State Patrol is asking motorists to honor the new laws and concentrate on being a defensive driver instead of being a distracted driver.

At any given moment, a vehicle could be in your path or heading toward your vehicle. Tragically, hundreds of people die in motor vehicle collisions every year in Washington State.

Attributes of a defensive driver:

- Good defensive drivers do not allow themselves to be distracted while driving.
- Defensive drivers pay attention to every aspect of their driving and they wear their seatbelt.
- Good drivers anticipate other drivers' actions and they have a plan of action if something goes wrong.
- Good drivers never follow too close and are ready for the unexpected.
- When their traffic light turns green, defensive drivers still look right and left before proceeding and they do not take side-street stop signs for granted.
- A good driver never misses a speed limit sign or other warning signs and they look as far down the road as they can.
- Defensive drivers take pride in their driving skills and ability to avoid collisions.

Sometimes even the best drivers can't avoid getting hit but their consistently good defensive driving habits definitely improve their chances of avoiding collisions.

Please talk with your family members about distracted driving. Let your teenagers know they're not invincible. Say "I love you" by encouraging them to focus on their driving when they're behind the wheel. Be a defensive driver, it could save you and your passengers' lives.